

## THE INDIANA CONFERENCE

October 3-5 it was our privilege to be present during the several sessions of the Indiana State Conference. It was a blessed meeting, a meeting that is destined to result in much good to the cause of the Master as represented by the Brethren church in the community in which it was held, in the state, and we trust in the entire brotherhood. The conference was held at Oakville where the Brethren have an organization of thoroughly in earnest people whose shepherd is Brother Ditch. We should like to speak of the hospitality of these people but it is already known and read of thru-out the churches of the state. They deserve special mention for the manner in which they entertained their visitors. Tho Oakville is at the extreme southern portion of the Brethren population in that state, yet the attendance was very good, most of the churches having been represented by delegates. This in itself speaks well for the zeal of the Brethren in Indiana, concerning which, however, it is not needful that we should write. There were present above fifty delegates, besides those not delegates, while the community turned out almost in a body. The night sessions were overflowing meetings; during the day sessions the house was well filled.

The conference was presided over by Brother Summers who disposes of business in a manner that becomes the dignity of that office. It is but just to say that all the interests of the church, whether state or national, were impartially treated by Brother Summers. Brother Miller, the secretary, keeps a very accurate and detailed account of all the business of the conference. One of the special features of this conference and one which deserves special mention was the Bible reading given by Brother Rensch on "Apostolic Labor," under three heads as follows: (1) The Deacon, (2) The Elders, and (3) The Evangelist. The reading was a very helpful and practical one and we have no doubt our people will be interested in an outline of it. Following are its several divisions with references:

## First Division—The Deacon

1. Office Continued.
  - (1) The church at Jerusalem. Acts 6:1-6.
  - (2) Elsewhere. Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:8-13.
2. Selection Of.
  - (1) Depends on needs. Acts 6:1.
3. Qualifications.
  - (1) Qualified before selection. Acts 6:3 and 5; I Tim. 3:10.
  - (2) Of good report. "Full of the Spirit," "and wisdom." Acts 6:3; I Tim. 3:8-13. How shall we tell? By their fruits, the fruits of the Spirit. Gal. 5:22, 23.
4. Choice Of.
  - (1) By congregation. Acts 6:2, 3.
  - (2) Method.
5. Ordination Of.
  - (1) By prayer and laying on of hands.
6. Work Of.
  - (1) Care of the poor. Acts 6:3.

- (2) Not to rule, but to serve.

## Second Division—Elders

1. In Jerusalem. Acts 11:30; 15:2-4. No account of where first called.
2. Qualifications. I Tim. 2:3-8; Titus 1:6-10.
  - (1) Negative.
    - (a) No brawler—not a striker.
    - (b) Not contentious, no lover of money.
    - (c) Not a novice.
  - (2) Positive.
    - (a) Be without reproach.
    - (b) Husband of one wife.
    - (c) Be soberminded, orderly.
    - (d) Be given to hospitality.
    - (e) Apt to teach, gentle, ruling his own house well.
    - (f) Have a good report from those without.
3. Ordination Of. Acts 14:23.
  - (1) By Evangelists. Acts 14:23; Titus 1:1-5; I Tim. 5:22.
4. Work Of.
  - (1) Acts 20:28, take heed, etc; I Tim. 4:12-16; I Peter 5:3.
  - (2) Take heed unto the church. Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2.
  - (3) Defend her. Acts 20:29-31.
  - (4) May need help as Ephesian elders did. I Tim. 1:3-4.
  - (5) Two classes of elders. I Tim. 5:17.

## Third Division—The Evangelist

1. Distinctive Work. Acts 13:2.
  - (1) Taught by the Holy Ghost
  - (2) Taught by the ministry of Philip. Acts 21:8. Acts 8,—sent as a preacher.
  - (3) Continuity of office. II Tim. 4:5; Eph. 4:11.
2. Qualifications.
  - (1) Of Barnabas. Acts 11:24.
  - (2) Of Titus. Titus 2:7, 8.
  - (3) Of Timothy. Let no man despise thy youth.
3. Selection and Ordination. Acts 13:3.
4. Work Of.
  - (1) Care of all the churches. II Cor. 11:28.
  - (2) Supervision by Paul,—
    - (a) Letter to churches. Thess. and Phil., and others.
    - (b) Letters to district, as Galatia.
    - (c) Wrote to preachers.
  - (3) Supervision by Peter and John. Acts 8:14.
  - (4) By Barnabas. Acts 14:19-25.

These references were accompanied by appropriate and helpful remarks from Brother Rensch who also introduced other references not here given. Where these officers are properly chosen, with due regard to their qualifications, and where the work of the several officers is clearly defined, and where there is apostolic supervision as taught in the Word and brought out by Brother Rensch in these Bible readings, we doubt very much whether such churches and districts will ever have any difficulty. It is to be hoped that the brotherhood will make a more careful study of this very important Bible subject, the lack of which has been the cause of about all our trouble.

The subject, "Our Publishing Interests," was presented by Brother Ditch, and it was well done. He spoke of these interests as *our* interests, interests that belong to the church, and for which each member of the church should feel a deep concern. Those denominations, he said, have made the greatest progress which have made the best

use of the religious press. He spoke of the products of the Publishing House and what they are used for, and made an earnest appeal for a unanimous support of all the interests of the Publishing House. "The College" was presented by Brother Bauman who made an excellent address on the subject, showing the great need of a denominational school in which the church may educate her own preachers. The need of the church is teachers and preachers. It is not true, he said, that the apostles were uneducated men. They had a three years' training under the greatest teacher the world ever knew and they became powerful men under his instruction. He referred to the Apostle Paul as the one chosen for his intellectual qualifications no less than for his fitness in other particulars. The address was, thru out, an appeal in behalf of our school, and its unanimous support by the church. He also emphasized the fact that if the church expects to go into the foreign field it is especially needful that she should have well trained men and women, intellectually as well as spiritually strong. The heathen are not an ignorant people, many of them are cultured, and to combat their religion, deeply rooted to the hearts and lives of the people by reason of age, requires well trained and intellectually strong men and women.

Brother W. H. Miller is the statistician of the state, and he does his work very thoroughly. A large chart gives in detail the statistics of each church in the state, the number of members, number added during the year, number lost, amount paid for missions, number of EVANGELISTS taken, number of services held, pastoral visits and many other items of interest. Woe unto the church which refuses to respond to his appeals for these statistics. They are sure to hear from Brother Miller at the conference and that not in an uncertain sound. Churches which fail to report are placed on the chart in red ink and the statistics given from the latest report in possession of the secretary whether a year or ten years old. Brethren ministers who do not wish to be a year or two or five behind the time will do well to answer Brother Miller's calls for the necessary statistics. The church, Brother Miller reported, has not prospered during the past year as it should have done, and gave as reasons the following:

1. Can not stand prosperity.
2. Too many have not the spirit of Christ.
3. Too many do not have the love of God in the heart.
4. Some preachers do not believe anything or perhaps everything and nothing in particular.
5. Some congregations think the preacher is preaching for money.
6. Too many do not stand by their pastor.